

Prescription For Love by orphan_account

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Summary:

Mike needs to fill a prescription for anxiety. He meets El the pharmacist. Angst ensues.

1. Dizzy Part I

The first time El Hopper saw Mike Wheeler, she felt both sad and sorry for him. His hair was a corkscrew mess, he had a three for four day beard going. Even through all that she could see how good looking he was. She remembered chastising herself for thinking about it but she was attracted to very few guys she saw... there was something about this one.

She hoped he wasn't coming in for a Methadone treatment. She felt for people with addictions but she wasn't going to have that in her life. Not now that she was doing so well. All the shit from the lab was in her past.

He waited politely at the turnstile.

El gave him her professional smile and asked if she could help him. He seemed to be very shy but handed her a scrip.

She looked down at it and his name Michael Wheeler. She recognized the drug. *He's depressed maybe a little anxiety too. If you're really shy that doesn't help at all. But this is the lowest dosage so he might not be too bad off.*

"I'll get this for you right now, ok?"

"Thank you."

El counted out his prescription for the month. She packaged it up per regulations and went back to the counter.

"Ok, you take one of these daily. It doesn't make any difference what time you take it, but try to take it with food and around the same time every day. If you forget to take one, and it's been around the twelve hour mark, wait till the time you would ordinarily take it."

"Thank you... um, are there any side effects?"

"With this one not usually. But we always give the standard you may

get dizzy or a headache for a few days before it gets into your system.”

“Oh... um, how long does it take to, um, get into my system?”

“The manufacturer says about two weeks, but we’ve found for... first timers... it’s closer to a week.”

El had to suppress a tear when she saw his eyes close in immense relief. “Thank you.”

He must feel really bad.

“Sir. Could you pop in here every night for the next week? Between five and seven? I’d like to check your progress.”

“Um, ok. You are very kind. Thank you.”

She felt a presence beside her as Michael Wheeler left. She turned to Don Melvald, his pharmacy was the only one in Hawkins and he knew everyone. He had a bit of a smirk on his face.

“What? I’d do that for anyone.”

“Of course you would El, that’s why I hired you. You are very pleasant to the customers and you are smart. It doesn’t hurt that he’s a hunk... is that the kids say now?”

“I think it’s hot and yes he is, but...” *But what El? Would you go out with him. A shy depressed guy who probably had panic attacks?*

Shit. Why can’t I meet a guy half normal?

Because I’m only half normal myself.

XXXXX

El figured he would forget to show up the next day. He was in around six thirty, he didn't look any different. Mess of black corkscrew hair, clothes maybe a little unkempt, now a four or five day beard.

El? Did you think that maybe he was trying to grow a beard?

He actually wandered around the aisles while she dealt with customers, but eventually he overcame his shyness again and approached her at the counter.

“Any side effects?”

“No, I feel kinda... good really. Might be a placebo effect, but I don’t care. I’ll be in to you tomorrow, I can see you are really busy.”

“I’ll be here.” She smiled at him as he left. “Don’t even say it Don.”

XXXXX

He didn’t come into the pharmacy the next day. El felt a little worried, it was her nature.

When the phone rang she scrambled for it. “Melvald’s Pharmacy, El speaking... how may I help you.”

“Um... El? It’s Mike Wheeler... I was feeling dizzy and didn’t want to risk going out, so I’m just um... checking into tell you that... I actually feel good. Dizzy aside... I feel good.”

“I’m so glad Mike. Just go to bed and rest.”

“You are very kind El... thank you.” He hung up.

Don had a mock stern look on his face, “Could you *please* tell your boyfriend not to call you at work?”

“Don? Would a few Fuckoffsipan pills help? I think there’s still some left in the back. Be hard for you to OD on them.”

“Ooh, ouch El. Even your insults are smart.”

“Seriously El... don’t... ah, how do I say this.”

“I can look after myself Don, but I do appreciate your concern.” She was absolutely *not* expecting her boss’s response.

“That’s not what I was going to say... Mike has not had a good childhood... between family... and he was bullied a lot... he’s been taken to emergency more times than,” Don Melvald sighed, “... El... please don’t break his heart.”

El was stunned.

XXXXX

She sat down hard on the stool behind the counter. How did her boss know what she herself didn’t even know?

That she was in love with Mike Wheeler.

A mostly total stranger who had obvious mental health issues. The feeling she had was more than just strong... it was overwhelming. She *knew* they had to be together.

She *knew* he was her soulmate.

The real problem was. Did he know it?

XXXXX

El had to do a double take.

An absolutely super hot piece of screwable meat walked into the pharmacy.

He was tall, better looking than any guy had a right to be, well dressed, a little pale but strong sharp features, dark and gentle eyes.

And his name is Mike Wheeler. What happened? This is not the same guy I met a few days ago. Shit. I have no shot with this guy at all. No way he doesn't have a girlfriend.

El saw that he exuded confidence. He waited politely at the turnstile. El's heart beat faster when she motioned him forward.

"Good evening, El. Checking in as you requested."

Her eyes went wide, she could barely speak.

"Ok... it looks like you noticed a change. I think that means it's working. I feel so good now that I want to ask you... um... ask you..."

El could see his confidence left him completely, he said "Good night... you've been very kind to me."

He turned around and left.

XXXXX

But he came in on the last day.

“How are you feeling Mike?” *Ok, I’m going to risk it.* “You look good.”

He blushed, “Thanks. I feel great. Sorry about yesterday... I uh... overstepped my... um... I may have overstepped.”

He was going to ask me out for a drink... or something.

“No worries. I’m very happy that you let me see your progress with the meds, it’s clear they are working properly. I... wanted to let you know that, I work at the blood clinic on Friday’s and Mondays, so if you stop in those days I won’t be here.”

He gave her a smile that made her... tingly... “Good to know.”

XXXXX

On Tuesday, he came in to buy a comb. El noted that he would never be able to use it with the hair he had on his head. That mess of black corkscrew hair was obviously the status quo for him. He waved to her when he saw her. El tried to give him the warmest smile she had.

On Wednesday he bought some nail clippers. He smiled at her and mouthed “Hello, I’m ok.”

On Thursday he looked a little down, but bought some Advil. He did wave at her but it wasn’t as enthusiastic as the days before.

XXXXX

On Friday, El was at the blood clinic helping to take blood. She knew she wouldn't see Mike till next Tuesday. She was a little depressed.

You are hung on up this guy El. How do you know he doesn't have a girlfriend or a boyfriend? ... and how do you know he doesn't know you don't have either one? Didn't think about that did you? A lot of girls claim guys just think with their dick. What about you El? Pussy or heart?

El wiped her eyes. *My heart of course! Fuck off.... well, then, you should be ashamed of yourself, he's a human being. Just like you. If he ever loves you... it will be for you .*

I know.

El busied herself prepping for the next person to come in for blood work. "Please lay down, I'll be with you in a moment." She turned around.

"Mike?"

"El?"

"Are you ok?"

"Uh, yeah, Doc says I should get blood work after the first week on meds to make sure it's in my system."

"Yes, of course. Ok, you are in this particular room because you aren't good with needles."

"Right." He gave a huge sigh. "I'm going to tell you what I tell every nurse who takes blood from me. I pass out... and from what I've

heard... I go into convulsions.”

“Ah, just lie down on the table, you’ll be fine.”

Mike hung his head. In an incredibly sad voice he said. “Ok... but... no I won’t be.”

El stopped what she was doing. “You’ve heard that before haven’t you? And the nurse was always right... wasn’t she?”

“No... you are right though... I’ve heard it before... yeah... and they were always wrong... always. I heard that one nurse, in training, apparently was so traumatized she quit the next day.”

El looked at him. He looked so sad that El just wanted to hug him and tell him it was ok. “Ok Mike. What can I do to make this easier for you?”

He looked up at her with such hope, El almost burst into tears. It was like she was the first person to ever listen to him about his problem.

“I’ll lay down, it’s much easier when I pass out. I mean, I don’t fall on the floor with a needle sticking out of my veins like somebody who just OD’d... but you will still have a needle in my arm, so I think having someone hold me down, or strap my arm down or something in case I convulse will be... um... easier for you. Afterwards I’m always told that it was because my blood sugar was low.” He shrugged, “I guess, an orange juice would help. But... um... El? What really helps is if you don’t talk to me, and I have a cold compress or something on my forehead. During... and until I can at least sit up.”

“Ok. Mike.”

“Ok?”

“Of course... oh... no nurse had done that for you already have they?”

He hung his head again and shook it. “I hate needles... and you know what they all say? I developed this phobia over the years of a bad experience. I would agree, but it’s been like this since I was in grade two. Not a lot of years to develop a phobia at that age. I remember

my grade two teacher holding my hand until I got back to class. When I was fifteen, I was in such bad shape over needles I would just start crying. I was fifteen... word gets around.”

Shit. That's one of the worst types of bullying, El thought.

XXXXX

Mike turned a shade of green that El was sure didn't exist in nature. She was taking a vial of blood, he said something unintelligible and then he passed out. He was strapped down properly, and another nurse was on hand to put a cold compress on his forehead.

“You want me to take over El?”

“Last vial. Take those to the lab? I want to be with him when he's conscious.”

The nurse winked at him, “Hold on to this one El, he's cute. Even green like that.”

“I will... If I get a chance.... I will. ”

XXXXX

Mike's eyes fluttered open in alarm, he grabbed on to El's arm.

“It's ok Mike.” El said in a soothing voice. “I'm here. I'm with you.”

She changed the cold compress with another cooler one.

He calmed down right away.

He sighed. “That feels good. You have no idea. Was it bad El? I’m sorry.”

“I think it would have been if I had ignored what you asked for.”

She saw two tears trickle down the corners of Mike’s eyes and travel down the side of his face as he lay there, clearly grateful.

“You are the first person to listen... and actually believe what I’ve said. Even my own mother didn’t. I don’t know how I’m ever going to repay your kindness. I mean... I knew you couldn’t stop me from passing out... but... you actually... helped when I did.”

The tears were streaming down the corners of his eyes.

And then El did something totally unprofessional. She took the cold compress away, leaned forward and kissed his forehead.

“I’ll take care of you, Mike. “ She whispered. “Just ask.”

But he looked like he hadn’t heard.

2. Dizzy II

Mike came in on Monday.

He bought a comb. Another one. She found that out much later when she asked the girl at the cash.

She laughed to herself. Those combs had been around since the fifties. Maybe if you were a Brylcreem-a-little-dab-will-do-ya kind of guy it might have worked. But he had a full head of long black corkscrew hair... that frankly... El wanted to run her fingers through when he was... down... there.

Anyway, he'd never be able to use that comb. He smiled and waved to her and he was out the door.

El dreamed about him that night.

XXXXX

On Tuesday El found out he bought a pair of nail clippers.

On Wednesday he bought some Aspirin.

On Thursday when El asked the girl at the cash, the girl smirked at her and said. "We have enough different products here El that he can come during the days of your shift for the next... oh... let's say three years?"

El blushed.

“Just ask him out El. Believe me... you’ll be doing him a favour... either by putting him out of his misery, or making his entire life complete... you... like him? ...don’t you?”

El nodded... “Do you think he’d go out with me?”

“Of course El... even with your hair.”

“Shit... I didn’t even think about that... he probably thinks I’m a dyke.”

The girl at the cash winced. “El... as a dyke myself I should tell you that we *really* prefer the word lesbian... well... at least I do.”

“Ah, double shit.... I know... I’m sorry... I was mostly being self-deprecating.”

“As a lesbian I should tell you that, short hair or not... you are very pretty. I mean... you aren’t my type but I know plenty of girls *and* guys who would love to date you.”

“I’m not available.”

“I know... you are his... and his alone. I can see that El....”

XXXXX

El saw him every day buying one sundry or another.

Hmm, he’s really shy, trying to hide his glances at me.

I’ve decided I like shy boys.

XXXXX

The next Thursday he came in, he looked nervous. He was waiting at the turnstile

Serious and nervous. I wonder what's going on?

El ushered him forward, he held up a piece of paper, "I'm supposed to, um, come here for my vaccine."

Ah, that's why. Needles.

"Sure, Mike, I'll do you right now..." El blushed. "I... I can give you yours now. You have to wait for fifteen minutes afterwards." She gestured to a door and Mike followed her in.

"I don't need to lay down for this one... shots in the arm aren't like having my blood taken." Mike said.

"Are you sure?" She couldn't help but smile at Mike when he smiled at her and nodded.

Mike rolled up his sleeve. His triceps and biceps, and other muscleceps were making her tingly. Very tingly.

Don't be such a nympho, El.

"Let me know when you are done... El... I want to walk around outside and get some fresh air. I'll stay within view."

"Ok. I was done before you started talking. You have... very, uh, rock hard arm muscles, you probably didn't feel a thing. Your arm is going to be really sore tomorrow. You might not even be able to sleep on it tonight."

“I don’t sleep anyways for the most part. No problem there.”

You’re not his doctor El. No advice.

“Ok... keep visible contact.” El told him.

“Yes, pretty lady.”

XXXXX

Ohmygodohmygodohmygod. He just called me pretty.

XXXXX

El’s boss came up to her. “Your boyfriend out there is looking a little dazed and heading for the intersection.”

She dropped what she was doing and ran out of the pharmacy.

“Mike! Mike! Are you ok?” She was right behind him but he continued to walk towards the intersection.

She stood right in front of him until he bumped into her. He stopped but he was looking right through her.

“Look at me Mike.”

Nothing.

"Still pretty?" she said desperately.

He looked right into her eyes.

He *saw* her.

"Yeah... pretty... *really* pretty... El... I don't know what's going on... I don't know where I am... take me... someplace safe... please?"

El did the only thing she could think of in the current state he was in. She took him home.

Her home.

XXXXX

El had just gotten Mike inside her door when she could see that his knees were wobbly.

He's going down. She let him down on the floor easily. He was out cold.

She ran to get a washcloth soaked in cold water, and a throw pillow from her futon. She put it under his head, and the washcloth over his forehead.

He came to almost right away.

"Ah, geez. Did I pass out again? Sorry El. I have no control over it. What did I ever do to deserve someone who is this kind to me?"

Exist. El thought.

"Are you ok to get up? You can sit or lay down on my futon. Much

better than the hardwood floors.”

“Yeah.” She helped him up *with some help from her ability*, and put her arms around waist.

She directed him toward the futon, but he took a quick glance and said, “Um... I can’t.” He pointed.

A pair of her lacy red panties, the one she wore with her red dress were folded up where he had looked.

She clapped a hand over her eyes. “Oh god, I’m so embarrassed. I was doing laundry before I left. I guess I didn’t finish.”

She quickly gathered it up plus a few other clothes and put them in a laundry basket she had sitting by the window.

He sat down. “Could I get some cold water?”

XXXXX

Ok. He’s not leaving. But then she found out why.

“I, um, guess I didn’t ask you to take me to my apartment.”

“Close. You asked for someplace safe. Where do you live? ...if you don’t mind me asking?”

“Hawkins Lofts, it’s across from the pharmacy where you work.”

“I live there. What floor are you on?”

“Eleven-fifty-five.”

“Mike... that’s right across the hall... I’m eleven-ffifty-four how come I’ve never seen you?”

He looked down... “It’s not like I haven’t tried to catch your attention... but... story of my life. Not successful with girls. Any girl.”

Face it El. You ignore almost everyone who looks at you. He was just one more. So why the interest now? It’s different now.

El felt like shit. She felt like an opportunity had been lost. An opportunity for a relationship. For love.

Ah shit. El remembered what day it was. Shit fucking shit and more shit.

“Mike, I don’t want to be rude, but I have a standing date with Max and I need to change out of these scrubs”

“Sorry El, I guess I felt a little too comfortable here, probably because it looks a lot like my own loft.”

El thought he would laugh at the end of his apology... he didn’t. His shoulder sort of slumped and his face fell with them.

He got up, “Thanks very much for your help and kindness. I’m not sure I can express how much it means to me.“

He got up and walked out the door, fishing into his pocket for his keys.

He closed the door behind him.

3. Chapter 3

El didn't expect to see him at the clinic on Monday, but she did expect to see him on Tuesday buying some inane drugstore product.

She didn't.

She didn't see him on Wednesday either.

Or Thursday.

Or that month.

XXXXX

Or the next month

XXXXX

On the third month, the date of his prescription renewal, she expected to see his hot, smiling face.

Nada.

She asked her boss using the excuse that she was a little worried that Mike hadn't been in for her prescription, she knew it was getting close for a refill.

"Oh? Didn't you know? He came in yesterday while you were at the blood clinic."

It would not have been nearly as painful had he just hauled his fist back and punched her in the stomach... and then a few more punched to the heart to finish her off.

Mike was avoiding her.

XXXXX

El had spiraled into depression. The kind that can only come from a lost love.

She hated that she seemed to have fallen in love with a stranger... and there it was. It was really that simple, admitting it scared her to death.

Ok, ok, he's not exactly a stranger, but all I know about him is that he takes meds for anxiety and he's not a needle fan. I don't care. I love him anyway. Just another unexplained thing in my life.

How am I ever going to explain to him about my ability? If... I even get a chance?

XXXXX

El went through the next few weeks in a daze. She did things out of

habit... she even cancelled her time with Max. At least three times.

She just didn't feel like crying to Max when they were supposed to be having fun.

XXXXX

She gathered up her laundry, red panties and all and put them in the laundry basket. She had this Friday afternoon off... no dates... nothing to do... so... laundry.

“Fuck.”

XXXXX

She saw his ass in track pants as soon as she walked into the laundry room. He was pulling clothes out of the dryer.

“Hey stranger!” She said, trying to keep her voice light.

He turned around surprised. “Hey, El. I just finished with these two machines, grab them before someone else comes down.”

“Thanks!” She rushed over and did what everyone else did in the building. Put the laundry basket on the big commercial dryer, and detergent on the washer. She smiled and turned around to ask how he was doing.

He was gone.

“Well... two fucks in one day and no kisses.”

El didn’t remember doing her laundry at all..

XXXXX

What are you going to do about it El?

“I have to know... one way or the other.” With that she put on her... *ok, tight jeans this time. Loose top though. No sense in giving that secret away.*

She walked across the hallway with a determination she didn’t feel in the least.

She knocked lightly on the door.

He opened the door. He was wearing track pants, and quite obviously no underwear. His shirt was unbuttoned and she saw his abs, and pecs... shoulder length wet corkscrew hair... and all the other things that... well... at least for her made her tingly.

“Hey again! Do you want to...”

“Yes.”

“You don’t even know what I was going to ask.”

“The answer is still yes.”

“What if I was going to ask you to spend the night with me?”

She winked at him. “There had better be movie and a dinner for me... and cookies of course.”

“Cookies?”

“Big O shaped cookies.”

He turned red. “Oh. I, uh really, uh sorry... uh, please don’t tell Max I don’t need him coming over here to try and beat me up.”

“Try?”

He did something she didn’t expect, he held out his arms and flexed his muscles. She’d already known that his arms were solid muscle... but that bicep... that bicep made her wet.

Ah, you’re such a nympho El.

“I got tired of being beat up a long time ago. I probably made the decision last time I was half unconscious in the hospital. I mean, I do *not* want to punch out your boyfriend. We’d never be friends after that.”

And then it dawned on El. That’s why he’d been avoiding her. He figured he had no chance with her.

“Mike? Max is a girl, Maxine. But don’t call her that.”

He glanced at her very short hair. His eyes dropped. He nodded slowly.

“Sorry El... I... uh... didn’t know. I apologize for any offensive gender remark I might have made.”

“You think I’m a lesbian.”

Mike had the deer-in-the-headlights look. *Ok, I’m not going to run him over. I’m going to save him.*

“Mike. I’m not a lesbian. Max and I *are* best friends though... we have a standing date where we drink lots of wine and watch a bad romcom... but... I’m also attracted to you. *Really* attracted to you. I think I would just forego the movie and dinner.... if that will never happen...” El gave him a big sigh. “Then please just tell me now.”

“ I was just about to try out my new espresso machine, you want to be the first with me in the grand experiment? We’ll take it from there. Ok?”

“Still yes, Mike.”

XXXXX

“That will wake you up in the morning!”

“Yeah, it’s strong. I only have one a day. In the morning.”

“I’d have to say I would rather have a wine buzz than a caffeine buzz.” El said. “I usually drink tea.”

“Tea can be a lot stronger than coffee. I drink both. More tea than coffee actually. But I like my coffee strong. The home machines aren’t thousand dollar espresso machines, but they make a really good strong coffee. Especially if you grind your own beans.”

El let herself have another nympho thought.

You can grind my bean, Mike.

XXXXX

“You took my advice.” El said, looking at Mike in the doorway,

wearing track pants and a t-shirt.

She was too, but her t-shirt was cut short to show her midriff. If she lifted her arms high enough, he could probably see the bottom of her breasts. She decided not to wear a bra.

Like you're really going to do that El. He takes one look at your breasts he's gonna turn into a limp noodle... you know what I mean.

“So What’s on the agenda?”

“Wine for you. Of course, I will ply you with liquor and then have my mouthbreather way with you.”

“Check.” El said, giving him a smile.

“Beer for me, obviously, I don’t do hard liquor... or even wine. And... the movie for tonight is... you, uh, requested a black and white movie. We have *Wages of Fear*... but... then we finish, we make popcorn and watch the remake, *Sorcerer*. The rope bridge scene will boggle your mind. I doubt it could even be filmed today with out cgi.”

They watched the two movies, made popcorn, drank their respective wine and beer.

El couldn’t remember when she had a better time.

XXXXX

“I have to pee.”

“Uh, ok. You remember where your bathroom is? ‘cause you are a little tipsy.”

"I'm shidvaced Mige... uh, I mean I'm a liddle tibsy."

El stood up, lost her balance and immediately fell back.

On to Mike.

He caught her.

He has his left hand on my ass cheek. Oh god. I'm not wearing panties. That's not the worst thing. His right hand is thoroughly clamped to my left breast.

But she didn't move. She was enjoying his hands on her.

El sighed. "Well I guess that secret is out now. Sorry Mike."

"Uh, what secret?"

"You're sweet... did you not notice you are now feeling up Eleven, the Titless Wonder?"

"I noticed that you breast feels nice in my hand. I'm assuming it's twin will also. And... well... you know, your ass feels pretty good in my hand also. More importantly, I think I saved you from cracking your head on the coffee table. You are the nurse... you would have to walk me through resuscitating you. "

El got the joke. Then then practically went into a fetal position on his lap when the very loud crack of thunder shook the building.

"Whew, that was close." Mike said.

El didn't move. She cringed and cried.

"You ok El?"

"No...," she said in a small voice.

"We're safe. I promise. I have seen all the lightning rods on the roof. It's up to code. We really are safe El. I promise."

El was no longer tipsy, but Mike helped her to bathroom. "I'll wait... then I'll tuck you in."

“Stay with me tonight?”

“Um... no El. You are... um... a little drunk. I would never take advantage. Not even with your verbal consent.”

“Can you... at least stay in the room? Or even on the bed? Fully clothed, I... I don’t like storms Mike. Usually I call Max over and she stays.”

She looked at him with her eyes and he nodded slowly, “I can see you’re scared. I’ll stay with you El.”

XXXXX

The storm ended around three in the morning.

Mike must have felt the tension leave her body. “Do you think you can sleep now?” He whispered.

“Yes. Cuddle me?”

Mike spooned her and they fell asleep in seconds.

XXXXX

“Thank you.”

“You slept well, although I’m surprised that the high powered chain saw didn’t wake you up.”

“Really? A chain saw? In the middle of the night?”

“Ok, well, other than loud I couldn’t quite tell, I *think* it might have been coming from your nose or your mouth... but it was *loud*.”

“So *that’s* what your job is? Funny boy comedian?”

He gave her a goofy smile.

“I’ll just have to live with it. Oh, guess what?” El said.

He waited.

“I’m not tipsy. I can make my own wine-less decisions.”

“Yeah? What’s that?”

“To sleep with the guy I’m in love with.”

“We just slept... oh... uh... I get it.”

“Funny and smart.”